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THE OPEN SOURCE MEDIA SUMMARY

September 2, 2021

READOUT OF THE SECOND ROUNDTABLE IN “THE TIME IS NOW: ADVANCING EQUITY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY” SERIES ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ANTI-RACISM

The White House | August 24, 2021

Last Friday, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) hosted the second “The Time is Now: Advancing Equity in Science & Technology” roundtable. The session entitled “No Time to Waste: Lessons Learned from the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine Summit on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism in 21st Century STEMM Organizations,” explored evidence-based, action-oriented approaches to overcome longstanding structural barriers to full and inclusive participation in science and technology classrooms, labs, workplaces, and research centers. These barriers adversely affect the entire science, technology, engineering, medicine and mathematics (STEMM) ecosystem, stifling creativity, innovation, and growth, and stunting the trajectories of individuals from groups that have been historically underrepresented in these fields.

Read the full article [here](#).

CHINA'S MICROSOFT HACK MAY HAVE HAD A BIGGER PURPOSE THAN JUST SPYING

Dina Temple-Raston | NPR | August 26, 2021

Steven Adair hunts hackers for a living. Back in January, in a corner-of-his-eye, peripheral kind of way, he thought he saw one in his customer's networks — a shadowy presence downloading emails. Adair is the founder of a cybersecurity company called Volexity, and he runs traps to corner intruders all the time. So he took a quick look at a server his client was using to run Microsoft Exchange and was stunned to “see requests that we're not expecting,” he said. There were requests for access to specific email accounts, requests for confidential files. He followed all this requested information to a virtual server off-site. “The hair is almost rising on my arms right now when I think about it,” Adair told NPR later. “This feeling of like, oh, crap this is not what should be going on.” What Adair discovered was a massive hack into Microsoft Exchange — one of the most popular email software programs in the world. For nearly three months, intruders helped themselves to everything from emails to calendars to contacts. Then they went wild and launched a second wave of attacks to sweep Exchange data from tens of thousands of unsuspecting victims. They hit mom-and-pop shops, dentist offices, school districts, local governments — all in a brazen attempt to vacuum up information.

Read the full article [here](#).



CISA ADDS SINGLE-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION TO LIST OF BAD PRACTICE

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency | August 30, 2021

Today, CISA added the use of single-factor authentication for remote or administrative access systems to our Bad Practices list of exceptionally risky cybersecurity practices. Single-factor authentication is a common low-security method of authentication. It only requires matching one factor—such as a password—to a username to gain access to a system. Although these Bad Practices should be avoided by all organizations, they are especially dangerous in organizations that support Critical Infrastructure or National Critical Functions. CISA encourages all organizations to review the Bad Practices webpage and to engage in the necessary actions and critical conversations to address Bad Practices. For guidance on setting up strong authentication, see the CISA Capacity Enhancement Guide: Implementing Strong Authentication.

Read the full article [here](#).

CHINA SHUTS AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN CHENGDU — REUTERS

Russell Flannery | Forbes | August 31, 2021

China has ordered an American Chamber of Commerce in the western business hub of Chengdu to cease operations, Reuters reported on Tuesday, citing officials with the American business organization. The chamber notified members on Monday that it had to stop operations and "no longer carry out any activities in the name of the American Chamber of Commerce in Southwest China," in accordance with China rules and regulations, Reuters said. The statement was seen by Reuters. It didn't give a specific reason why the chamber it had been instructed to cease operations. China ordered the closure of the U.S. Consulate in Chengdu in July 2020 in apparent retaliation after the Trump administration ordered the shuttering of the Chinese consulate in Houston. Chengdu is best known among many travelers globally for its pandas and hotpot cuisine. Its large group of multinational investors include Intel, Texas Instruments and Toyota.

Read the full article [here](#).

FBI WARNS BIG TECH THAT CHINESE OR RUSSIAN EMPLOYEES COULD BE COERCED INTO SPYING BY ENEMIES PUTTING PRESSURE ON THEIR FAMILIES

Keith Griffith | Daily Mail | August 20, 2021

The FBI has warned tech firms that employees with ties to China and Russia may be spying on them - and says insiders are often coerced into stealing secrets against their will. FBI Special Agent Nick Shenkin, the Director of the Strategic Technology Task Force for the FBI's San Francisco Field Division, spoke out about the threat in an interview with Protocol published on Thursday. While some insider spies are in it for the money, or a sense of loyalty to a foreign country, most often they are coerced by threats from a foreign regime, Shenkin says. The agent said in one case he worked on, Chinese government agents threatened to deny an employee's mother dialysis back in China if he didn't steal proprietary information from a large technology company. 'A lot of what the briefings cover is the idea that this is not about the ethnicity of the individual. This is about: What is any individual's or entity's vulnerability to the jurisdiction of an autocracy?', he said.

Read the full article [here](#).



U.S. SENATOR RUBIO DEMANDS ANSWERS ON HUAWEI'S AUTO CHIP APPROVALS

Reuters | August 26, 2021

U.S. Senator Marco Rubio on Thursday released a statement "demanding answers" from the Biden Administration about a Reuters report the U.S. has approved license applications worth hundreds of millions of dollars for China's Huawei to buy chips for its growing auto business. Huawei, the world's largest telecommunications equipment maker, has been hobbled by trade restrictions imposed by the Trump administration on the sale of chips and other components used in its network gear and smartphones businesses. But in recent weeks and months, people familiar with the application process told Reuters the U.S. has granted licenses authorizing suppliers to sell chips to Huawei for such vehicle components as video screens and sensors. The approvals come as Huawei pivots its business toward items that are less susceptible to U.S. trade bans. "The Biden Administration cannot be allowed to hide this approval from the public," Rubio said. "Officials need to come forward with what actions they took and why."

Read the full article [here](#).

A RESET IN RESEARCH COLLABORATION WITH CHINA IS NEEDED

Denis Simon | University World News | August 28, 2021

It is time for someone to take a contrarian, positive-sum view about the current situation regarding United States-China science and technology (S&T) cooperation and academic exchanges. The S&T cooperation and educational and scholarly exchanges components of the US-China relationship were first consummated during the 1978-79 period as China was just re-opening to the outside world. Early exchanges were limited in number as were the numbers of Chinese students and scholars coming to the US. Most students were graduate students and were funded by the Chinese government. Aside from Chinese nuclear weapons, few were concerned about any economic or technological threat or competition from China. Given the prevailing state of the Chinese economy at the time and the level of technology in place in Chinese industry, China was just an afterthought other than perhaps the lingering dream of one billion potential customers. Even as Chinese leaders talked openly and explicitly about closing the technology gap with the West and eventually catching up, the prospect of a serious challenge from China seemed unlikely at a minimum.

Read the full article [here](#).

STUDENT MOBILITY: CAN THE US CORRECT ITS LOSS OF PRIMACY?

Philip G. Altbach and Hans de Wit | University World News | August 28, 2021

It may seem contradictory, but the United States, long the leader in absolute numbers of inbound global student degree mobility, has lost its primacy, but at the same time remains, and will continue to be, in absolute numbers the leading destination for international students. Well before the COVID crisis, US numbers were in decline. Competition has increased from the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada (all English-speaking countries) along with the two other big recipients, France and Germany. Increasingly, there is also competition from other European countries such as the Netherlands, and recently Asian countries, but not only China. As Karin Fischer and Sasha Aslanian point out in their article, "Fading Beacon. The US will never regain its dominance as a destination of international students", published in the Chronicle of Higher Education, it is particularly opportune to look at the future international prospects of higher education in the United States.

Read the full article [here](#).



‘SLEDGEHAMMER’: PLAN TO FORCE UNIVERSITY STAFF TO REVEAL FOREIGN POLITICAL HISTORY

Lisa Visentin | The Sydney Morning Herald | August 28, 2021

A confidential plan to force tens of thousands of university staff to reveal a decade of foreign political and financial interests has met with such fierce backlash that the federal government is now reviewing the proposal. New draft foreign interference guidelines for universities are proposing to demand academics disclose their membership of overseas political parties and any financial support they have received from foreign entities for their research over the past 10 years. Multiple university sources, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said there was widespread concern about the requirements, with one university executive describing it as “a sledgehammer, blanket approach” to the issue. The proposed guidelines, which have been drafted by the University Foreign Interference Taskforce (UFIT), represent a major ramping up of scrutiny of academics’ backgrounds in response to concerns within the federal government about research theft by the Chinese Communist Party and other foreign actors.

Read the full article [here](#).

WHO CONTROLS NYU SHANGHAI?

Elizabeth Redden | Inside Higher Ed | August 25, 2021

Matthew Belanger filed suit in U.S. federal court against New York University and NYU Shanghai earlier this year, alleging discrimination under the Americans With Disabilities Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, among other federal and New York State laws. Belanger, who alleges he was compelled to accept a demotion and illegally discriminated against on the basis of disability, sex, national origin and race, holds titles as an assistant arts professor at NYU Shanghai and a cross-appointment as Global Network Assistant Arts Professor at NYU. But while Belanger has titles at both NYU and NYU Shanghai, both entities argue he has no right to sue them in U.S. courts. NYU argues that Belanger was hired to work at, and signed an employment contract with, NYU Shanghai, not NYU, and that any disputes are subject to Chinese laws and dispute-resolution mechanisms. Meanwhile, NYU Shanghai has asserted that it is neither a U.S. employer nor a foreign entity controlled by a U.S. employer, and it is therefore not covered under the ADA and Title VII’s extraterritorial provisions.

Read the full article [here](#).

FIRST JAIL TERM FOR UNDISCLOSED FOREIGN SUPPORT APPEALED; NIH’S LAUER LAMENTS ‘TRAGIC’ OSU CASE

Theresa Defino | JD Supra | August 27, 2021

To his supporters and colleagues, Song Guo Zheng, MD, PhD, was the most productive worker they’ve seen in 50 years, publishing nearly 300 papers, a man who lived modestly and was “at the forefront” of research into autoimmune disorders to which he “devoted his professional life.” Yes, he made mistakes when he failed to report all of the support and positions he held in China, but he did not benefit personally. To NIH and other government officials, the former chair of Ohio State University’s (OSU) Division of Rheumatology and Immunology in the Department of Internal Medicine was a liar, a criminal and a forger whose actions, influenced by ties to China, led to a “tragic” loss of nearly \$4 million in federal research dollars and may have tainted the studies they funded. Zheng, 58, who pleaded guilty in November to making false statements, has been in prison since his arrest on May 22, 2020.[1] This May, Algenon Marbley, chief judge for the Southern District of Ohio, sentenced him to 37 months in prison.[2] To date, his is the harshest sentence for this type of crime.

Read the full article [here](#).



WHY ALBERTA MUST RETHINK ITS BAN ON CANADA-CHINA UNIVERSITY COLLABORATIONS

Sibo Chen, Henry Yu, and John Price | The Conversation | June 23, 2021

Alberta's Ministry of Advanced Education recently ordered the province's four major research universities to suspend pursuing new or renewed partnerships with organizations linked to China or the Chinese Communist Party. This order has triggered serious concern among Canadian scholars and academic institutions. Both Gordon Houlden and Wenran Jiang — former directors of the University of Alberta's China Institute — have defended the importance of fostering a better understanding of China among Canadian policy-makers as well as the general public. The Alberta government's order is not in isolation. It was a direct response to a May 3 news report that criticized the University of Alberta's extensive scientific collaboration with China.

Read the full article [here](#).

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BEGIN TO RETURN TO U.S. UNIVERSITIES AFTER A COVID HIATUS.

Tiffany May | The New York Times | August 24, 2021

After a precipitous drop in international student enrollment in 2020, the number of American student visas granted to international students has recovered to levels preceding the coronavirus pandemic. This year, American consulates approved almost 117,000 F-1 student visas in May and June, about 90 percent of figures in 2019, according to U.S. State Department data. Among them, 85,000 Chinese students, who make up a large proportion of the international cohort, received F-1 student visas since May, according to the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, an increase from 2019. Last year, the number of international students in the United States on F-1 and M-1 visas fell by 20 percent to 1.25 million, while the number of new students dropped by 72 percent. Some students had opted to take classes remotely while others deferred their education in the United States because of coronavirus restrictions, including the suspension of in-person lessons.

Read the full article [here](#).

IS THE WORLD SPLITTING INTO OPPOSING SCIENCE 'BLOCS'?

Yojana Sharma | University World News | June 23, 2021

A race for supremacy in global science and technology has kicked off as China has announced a raft of ambitious policies to promote self-sufficiency in scientific research and technological advancement, and the United States has mapped out a major push in science and technology backed by huge rises in spending. Some fear the rivalry could lead to an emerging division in global science into two opposing science 'blocs', an echo of the military and economic divisions of the Cold War era. But even those who discount such a rift in global science note a changing landscape in research and technology under US President Joe Biden, in part a continuation of the US-China trade war under predecessor Donald Trump, which sought to 'decouple' years of China-US research collaboration.

Read the full article [here](#).

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